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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE  
TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION, ECOLOGICAL SCIENCES  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

and the  
NEW JERSEY AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION  
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY  
NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY

NOTICE OF RELEASE OF 'ATLANTIC' COASTAL PANICGRASS

The United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service and the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station announce the release of 'Atlantic' coastal panicgrass [Panicum amarum var. amarulum (A. Hitchc. & Chase) P. G. Palmer]. It was developed at the Soil Conservation Service Plant Materials Centers at Beltsville, Maryland and Cape May, New Jersey.

Atlantic originated as an increase of a 1955 field collection from sand dunes on the Back Bay Wildlife Refuge near Princess Anne, Virginia. Seed collected at Back Bay was brought to Beltsville (designated BN-8360) to establish the first increase planting. Using seed produced at Beltsville, a production field was established at the Cape May Center in 1965 and designated NJ-49. It was renumbered PI-421136 in 1979.

Atlantic coastal panicgrass is a tall, robust, warm season perennial grass. Its growth habit is upright with culms reaching a height of 1.5 to 2.0 meters. Plants have the appearance of a bunch grass, although short, ascending rhizomes are produced. Atlantic is bluish green, leafy, multistemmed and produces large quantities of viable seed. It is characterized by good seedling vigor for the species, uniform growth characteristics and reliable seed production under cultivation. It is typical of the species with regard to leafiness, height and culm size. Atlantic has considerably less rust than other collections evaluated. Plants have not been adversely effected by disease or insects. Its stiff stems remain upright throughout much of the winter, even during periods of moderate snow cover.

The principal use of Atlantic will be for stabilizing a variety of disturbed sites. It can be direct seeded on sand dunes except active frontal types. It performs satisfactorily for stabilizing sandy, infertile inland sites such as sand and gravel mines and roadside embankments. It has excellent drought tolerance and makes satisfactory growth on imperfectly drained soils. Resistance of the stems to lodging and the quantity of forage and seed produced enhance its wildlife food and cover value.

Field tests show Atlantic to be well adapted in the coastal plain and piedmont regions from Massachusetts to Texas. The principal factor limiting geographic adaptation is lack of cold tolerance below 00F (-180C).

Breeder and foundation seed of Atlantic will be maintained by the Soil Conservation Service Plant Materials Center, Cape May, New Jersey. Foundation seed is available and limited quantities of certified may be available in 1982.

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*8/5/81*

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*Aug 23, 1981*

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